

## **Plant a Tree this Spring with Help from the Montgomery County Planning Department**

**SILVER SPRING, MD** – To achieve a number of environmental goals in its ongoing efforts to “green” Montgomery County, the Planning Department has launched a program to encourage residents to plant trees in their yards.

Called Leaves for Neighborhoods, the campaign features a coupon valid at participating county nurseries. The \$25 discount off native shade trees worth \$75 or more is intended to increase the county’s tree canopy on residential property, which will bring a host of environmental benefits. For example, trees help prevent erosion, improve local air quality and filter stormwater runoff to improve area streams and rivers.



Residents seeking to get involved with environmental stewardship will find the program easy to use. Moreover, trees have economic benefits. Shade trees can lower energy costs 15 to 30 percent by reducing the need for heating and air-conditioning.

The \$25 coupon is available at [www.montgomeryplanning.org/environment/forest/leaves\\_for\\_neighborhoods.shtm](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/environment/forest/leaves_for_neighborhoods.shtm) and will be distributed at area nurseries, Park and Planning headquarters and county park facilities in early May.

The campaign is funded by the Montgomery County Forest Conservation Fund. The county’s Forest Conservation Law may require property owners or developers to reforest or pay a fee in lieu of planting when they file applications with the Planning Department. The fees support the Leaves for Neighborhoods campaign, which will run from May 1, 2009 to May 31, 2010.